

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 20 is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Applicant gratefully appreciates the indication of claims 8, 10, 12 and 13 contain allowable subject matter.

The courtesies extended to Applicants representative during the personal interview held January 18, 2006 by Examiner Erdem are gratefully appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants record of the interview.

The Office Action rejects claims 7, 9, 11 and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Takagi (U.S. Patent No. 5,252,844) in view of Kimura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,657,531). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As agreed during the personal interview, none of the applied references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a semiconductor integrated circuit that includes a semiconductor substrate and an interlayer insulating film covering the surface of the semiconductor substrate, the interlayer insulating film having a top surface and a contact hole over the semiconductor region, a central portion of the contact hole having a columnar insulator region having a top end lower than the top surface of the interlayer insulating film, as recited in independent claim 7.

Specifically, as discussed during the personal interview, the capacitor insulating films 35-1 to 35-n in Kimura, formed on the inner walls of the deep trenches 34-1 to 34-n, are not at a central portion of the contact hole, as is clearly evident from an observation of Fig. 2. If the capacitor insulator films are formed on the inner walls of the deep trenches (col. 4, lines 7-9), then the capacitor insulator films cannot be a central portion of the contact hole.

As further agreed during the personal interview, Kimura does not teach an electrode that contacts the semiconductor region at a periphery of a bottom of the contact hole, as recited in independent claim 7. Kimura does not show the structure of the bottom of the buried electrode 36-1 to 36-n. Thus, Kimura has no teaching of an electrode that contacts the semiconductor region at a periphery of a bottom of the contact hole, as recited in independent claim 7.

For at least these reasons, a combination of the applied references would not arrive at the subject matter of the claimed invention. Thus, independent claim 7, and its dependent claims, are patentable over the applied references. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-20 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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